

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 2, 2007

President George W. Bush
The White House
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. President:

We write today to express our grave concerns regarding the Department of Transportation's intention to move forward with the Cross-Border Demonstration Program, a program that will open the door to thousands of Mexico-domiciled commercial trucks on United States highways without the proper safeguards in place to ensure that these foreign participants comply with Homeland Security and immigration standards and laws. We understand the Administration's duty to adhere to our obligations under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), but this must never come before our duty to maintain the security and welfare of the American people.

The U.S. Congress and the American people seriously question the ability of Mexican motor carriers and drivers to adhere to our country's strict safety rules, as well as the Administration's preparedness and willingness to ensure Mexican truck drivers obey our homeland security and immigration rules. As such, Congress mobilized to speak against it. Congress had already passed H.R. 1773, the "Safe American Roads Act of 2007," which passed overwhelmingly 411-3, and related language in P.L. 110-28, the FY07 supplemental appropriations act. Both pieces of legislation provided strict measures to ensure that the Department of Transportation and the pilot program would adhere to security guidelines and that an independent panel would assess their progress in ensuring American safety. However, even after you signed the supplemental into law, the Department of Transportation arrogantly declared that these standards had already been met, that no independent assessment would be needed, and that the pilot program would proceed as previously planned. If Congress believed that the provisions in the supplemental had already been met, then there would have been no need to incorporate such language. The Department of Transportation should not stand above the law.

The Cross-Border Demonstration Program would give Mexican truck drivers unfettered access to the United States without a demonstrable way to verify their identity, immigration status and length of stay in the United States. It is also unclear which law enforcement personnel have the responsibility, authority and training to check a Mexican driver's status and enforce compliance with the federal laws once they are in the United States. The program would open major loopholes that would allow violators to disregard our laws because we have no verifiable system in place to identify and deal with them. Again, Congress and the American public must be convinced that the Department of Transportation is meeting the provisions recently passed into law before moving forward with this program.

Mr. President, we understand your intention to fully implement the provisions of NAFTA by opening our Southern border to commercial traffic. However, those interests should not be put ahead of our public safety, homeland security, and economic vitality. We strongly urge you

to suspend plans for the Cross-Border Demonstration Program until these serious issues can be addressed.

Sincerely,

Kevin Bodya

Gay Miller

Shad Mungello

Donald Mayne

John Culberson

Pat Murphy

John Paul

Hilda A. Siles

Marilyn Musgrave

Uma Hunt

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